

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES AMONG PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN MONCADA SOUTH DISTRICT

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Abstract

This study explored the creativity and innovative leadership competencies among public school principals in Moncada South District. It examined their profiles in terms of educational background and work experience, their level of creativity and innovative leadership competencies, factors contributing to these skills, challenges faced in fostering creativity, and the relationship between their profiles and competencies. The study also proposed development programs to enhance these competencies.

Descriptive research was employed to systematically describe the existing characteristics and competencies of the school principals. Frequency and percentage were used to analyze their profiles and the factors influencing their development. A five-point Likert scale assessed their current level of creativity and innovative leadership and the challenges they face. Pearson r determined the relationship between their profiles and leadership competencies.

The findings highlight the importance of tailored professional development programs that address the specific needs of principals based on their experience and background. Schools are encouraged to foster a culture that values creativity and innovation, supported by grants for innovative projects. Principals should pilot low-risk initiatives to demonstrate the impact of creative ideas. Measurable objectives for development programs are essential to track their effectiveness in enhancing leadership competencies.

These recommendations aim to strengthen the creative and innovative leadership capacities of school principals, empowering them to lead their schools effectively in a dynamic educational environment.

Keywords: Creativity, Innovative Leadership, School Principals, Professional Development, Educational Leadership

Introduction

The educational landscape is constantly transforming, driven by technological advancements, evolving societal expectations, and the need to equip students with the skills to thrive in a complex, interconnected world (Decuyper et al., 2021). Within this dynamic environment, the role of school principals has evolved beyond traditional administrative duties (Dare & Saleem, 2022). They are now expected to be not only effective managers but also visionary leaders capable of fostering innovation, nurturing creativity, and driving positive change within their schools (Bhujel, 2021). This research delves into the critical area of creativity and innovative leadership competencies among public school principals in the Moncada South District, exploring their current capabilities, identifying influencing factors, and proposing targeted interventions to enhance their leadership effectiveness.

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The importance of creative and innovative leadership in education cannot be overstated. In an era of rapid change and uncertainty, schools require leaders who can think outside the box, embrace new ideas, and inspire their staff and students to do the same (Mokat, 2020). Principals with strong creative and innovative leadership competencies are better equipped to navigate the challenges of the modern educational landscape, adapt to evolving circumstances, and create learning environments that foster student success (Kadri et al., 2021). They are the catalysts for change, driving improvements in teaching practices, curriculum development, and overall school performance (Short & Hirsh, 2020).

This research focuses specifically on public school principals in the Moncada South District. This context provides a unique opportunity to examine the specific challenges and opportunities faced by principals in this region and to develop tailored interventions that address their specific needs. By focusing on this geographical area, the study aims to provide actionable insights and recommendations that can be directly implemented to enhance the creative and innovative leadership competencies of principals in the Moncada South District.

The study is guided by several key research questions. First, it seeks to understand the current level of creativity and innovative leadership competencies among principals in the target district. This involves assessing their ability to generate novel ideas, implement innovative solutions, and foster a culture of creativity within their schools (Rachmawati et al., 2020). Second, the research explores the factors that contribute to the development of these competencies, including examining the influence of their educational background, professional development experiences, and the organizational culture within their schools (Matraeva et al., 2020). Third, the study investigates the challenges faced by principals in cultivating creativity and innovation in their schools, such as limited resources, resistance to change, and lack of support from stakeholders (Mansor et al., 2020). Finally, the research aims to propose targeted development programs and interventions to enhance the creative and innovative leadership competencies of principals in the Moncada South District. These programs are designed to be practical, sustainable, and tailored to the specific needs of the target population (Antes & Schuelke, 2011).

This research employed a descriptive research method, which is beneficial in accurately representing groups, situations, or events through detailed observations, surveys, or case studies (Mielke et al., 2022). In the context of educational leadership, descriptive research can offer valuable insights into the current practices, competencies, and challenges school principals face (Johnson et al., 2020).

The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, educational leaders, and principals themselves. By identifying the current state of creative and innovative leadership competencies among principals in the Moncada South District, the study aimed to inform the development of targeted professional development programs and interventions. These initiatives are designed to equip principals with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively lead their schools in a dynamic and ever-changing educational environment (Darling-Hammond et al., 2022). The research also contributes to the broader body of knowledge on educational leadership, providing valuable insights for other researchers and practitioners interested in fostering creativity and innovation in schools (Ronksley-Pavia & Neumann, 2022).

Furthermore, this study recognizes the importance of contextual factors in shaping leadership practices. The specific challenges and opportunities present in the Moncada South District are carefully considered, ensuring that the proposed interventions are relevant and effective within this context. This localized approach is crucial for ensuring that the research

findings can be translated into practical actions that directly benefit the schools and communities within the district. By focusing on the specific needs of the Moncada South District, the study aims to contribute to the improvement of educational leadership practices within this region and, ultimately, to the enhancement

Method

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research approach to explore the creativity and innovative leadership competencies among public school principals in the Moncada South District. The descriptive research method was chosen to accurately represent the current state of these competencies, as well as to identify the factors that influence their development and the challenges that principals face in fostering innovation within their schools (Tajik & Wali, 2020) (Cheboi, 2016).

Participants

The participants in this study were public school principals from the Moncada South District. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the principals, ensuring that the sample was representative of the diversity within the district in terms of school size, student demographics, and years of principal experience (Johnson et al., 2020).

Instrumentation

This study's primary data collection instrument was a survey questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed to gather comprehensive information on the principals' self-reported creativity and innovative leadership competencies, as well as the factors that contribute to the development of these competencies and the challenges they face.

Data Analysis

The data collected through the survey questionnaires were analyzed using a combination of quantitative techniques. Descriptive statistics, such as mean scores and frequency and percentages, were calculated to provide an overview of the principals' creativity and innovative leadership competencies.

The data analysis process was an iterative one, with the researchers moving back and forth the qualitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Results

Creativity and Innovative Leadership Competencies of Public-School Principals

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The findings from this study indicate that the level of creativity and innovative leadership competencies among public school principals in Moncada South District reveals a generally positive self-assessment across various dimensions, with mean scores ranging from 3.5 to 4.3 on a five-point Likert scale. Notably, the highest scores are in "Encouraging and Supporting New Ideas" (4.3) and "Visionary Thinking" (4.2), indicating that principals perceive themselves as highly effective in fostering an environment that values innovation and forward-looking strategies. These competencies are crucial for nurturing a school culture that embraces change and encourages the exploration of new teaching methodologies and technologies. Conversely, the lowest score appears in "Risk-Taking and Experimentation" (3.5), suggesting a potential area of

development where principals might benefit from targeted professional learning opportunities to enhance their comfort with and manage uncertainty and failure as part of the innovation process.

Factors Influencing the Development of Creativity and Innovative Leadership Competencies

The study's findings highlight several key factors that contribute to the development of creativity and innovative leadership competencies among public school principals in the Moncada South District. The results revealed that the access to professional development programs is perceived as the most significant factor, with 87.5% of the respondents highlighting its importance. Additionally, supportive school culture and feedback and support from teachers and staff are highly valued, indicated by 80% and 85% of principals, respectively, pointing towards the importance of a collaborative and encouraging environment for the growth of leadership competencies.

The results underscore the value of continuous learning and the development of a growth mindset among principals, as well as the crucial role of school culture and community engagement in nurturing creative and innovative practices.

Challenges in Fostering Creativity and Innovation among Public School Principals

The research also identified several key challenges that public school principals in the Moncada South District face in fostering creativity and innovation within their schools. The most significant challenge, as reported by include limited resources and funding, with a mean score of 4.5, and resistance to change among staff, with a score of 4.2. These scores suggest principals need help securing the necessary support and infrastructure to implement innovative educational practices and technologies. Additionally, overcoming the skepticism or inertia within school cultures towards new methods or ideas poses a substantial barrier to fostering an environment conducive to creativity.

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the pivotal role that creativity and innovative leadership competencies play in driving positive change and improvement within public schools in the Moncada South District. The principals' high self-assessment scores in areas such as "Encouraging and Supporting New Ideas" and "Visionary Thinking" suggest that many recognize the value of these competencies and are actively working to cultivate them in their schools (Kene et al., 2021).

The results also highlight the critical factors contributing to the development of these competencies, including access to professional development, supportive school cultures, and feedback and support from teachers and staff. By investing in these areas, school districts can empower principals to become more effective leaders capable of driving innovation and continuous improvement (Pata et al., 2021).

However, the study also reveals the significant challenges principals face in fostering creativity and innovation, particularly in terms of limited resources and funding, as well as resistance to change among staff. These findings suggest that school districts and policymakers must address these barriers, whether through targeted funding initiatives, professional development programs, or strategies to build more change-oriented school cultures (Kraft & Lyon, 2024).

This research has provided valuable insights into the creativity and innovative leadership competencies of public-school principals in the Moncada South District, as well as the factors that influence their development and the challenges they face. These findings can inform the design of professional development programs, policy decisions, and school-level initiatives aimed at empowering principals to become more effective, innovative leaders who can drive meaningful improvements in their schools (Levin et al., 2020).

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